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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 AMMAN 003609

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARN, NEA/PA, NEA/AIA, INR/NESA, R/MR,  
I/GNEA, B/BXN, B/BRN, NEA/PPD  
USAID/ANE/MEA  
LONDON FOR GOLDRICH  
PARIS FOR O'FRIEL  
USCINCENT/CCPA, USCENCOM REAR MACDILL AFB FL  
NICOSIA FOR ILMG  
STATE PASS TO AID

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR JO](#)

SUBJECT: JORDAN MEDIA REACTION ON PRESIDENT'S MIDDLE  
EAST SPEECH.

#### SUMMARY

NEWS REPORTS IN JORDAN'S DAILIES QUOTED THE PALESTINIAN  
STATEMENTS THAT NO PALESTINIANS WOULD MEET SECRETARY  
POWELL WITHOUT THE GREEN LIGHT TO DO SO FROM ARAFAT.  
ASSABEEL, WEEKLY NEWSPAPER REFLECTING THE VIEWS OF THE  
ISLAMIC ACTION FRONT, ADDRESSED RARE BUT POINTED  
CRITICISM TO THE GOVERNMENT OF JORDAN FOR ITS:  
"EXAGGERATED OFFICIAL WELCOME OF THE U.S. PRESIDENT'S  
WORST SPEECH SO FAR."

EDITORIAL COLUMNISTS CONTINUED THEIR CRITICISMS OF  
PRESIDENT BUSH'S SPEECH, ADDING CRITICISM OF SECRETARY  
POWELL'S CALL FOR A CHANGE OF LEADERSHIP.

#### NEWS REPORTS

JORDANIAN DAILIES ON JULY 2 HIGHLIGHTED THE PALESTINIAN  
CHIEF NEGOTIATOR SA'EB EREQAT'S STATEMENT MADE IN CAIRO  
THAT NO PALESTINIAN WOULD MEET SECRETARY POWELL UNLESS  
ARAFAT GIVES HIM THE GREEN LIGHT TO DO SO. THE SAME  
STORY, WHICH WAS VIRTUALLY IDENTICAL IN BOTH SEMI-  
OFFICIAL INFLUENTIAL ARABIC DAILY AL-RAI AND CENTER-  
LEFT, INFLUENTIAL ARABIC DAILY AL-DUSTOUR, ALSO QUOTED  
THE PALESTINIAN OFFICIAL STATEMENT REJECTING THE  
"CAMPAIGN AGAINST PALESTINIAN INDEPENDENCE" AND THE  
PALESTINIAN CALLS FOR CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE AGAINST THE  
ISRAELI CIVIL AUTHORITY IF IT REPLACES THE PNA, AND THE  
THREAT TO RETURN TO TOTAL MILITARY ACTION.

ARABIC-LANGUAGE WEEKLY ASSABEEL, GENERALLY REFLECTING  
THE VIEWS OF THE ISLAMIC ACTION FRONT (THE POLITICAL  
PARTY BASED ON THE MUSLIM BROTHERS MOVEMENT),  
CRITICIZED THE JORDANIAN GOVERNMENT STRONGLY FOR ITS:  
"EXAGGERATED OFFICIAL WELCOME OF THE U.S. PRESIDENT'S  
WORST SPEECH SO FAR." AMONG THE PEOPLE INVITED TO  
COMMENT ON THE GOVERNMENT'S REACTION WAS A FORMER  
MINISTER OF CULTURE WHO EXPLAINED THE GOVERNMENT'S  
POSITION AS BEING INTENDED TO "WARD OFF HARM."  
ASSABEEL WAS THE ONLY NEWSPAPER TO QUOTE THE STATEMENT  
OF THE ISLAMIC ACTION FRONT THAT CRITICIZED THE  
GOVERNMENT FOR "SUPPORTING A SPEECH THAT EQUATES  
BETWEEN JIHAD AND TERRORISM" AND THE STATEMENT OF THE  
MUSLIM BROTHERS, WHICH SAID THAT THE PRESIDENT'S  
SPEECH: "LEFT THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE NO OPTION BUT  
JIHAD."

#### EDITORIAL COMMENTARIES

-- BUSH'S SPEECH AND IGNORING THE FACT OF THE  
OCCUPATION  
FORMER PARLIAMENTARY DEPUTY HAMADEH FARA'NEH WROTE IN  
SEMI-OFFICIAL INFLUENTIAL ARABIC DAILY AL-RAI ON JULY  
2: "PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH'S SPEECH TURNED A BLIND EYE  
TO THE ONE REASON THAT SPARKED OFF AND ACCUMULATED THE  
CONTINUOUS AGGRESSION, CONFLICT, AND FRUSTRATION IN OUR  
REGION, WHICH IS ISRAEL'S OCCUPATION OF THE LAND THAT  
BELONGS TO THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE, WHO HAVE BEEN  
MARGINALIZED FOR DECADES. PRESIDENT BUSH IS WORKING TO  
ENSURE HIS PARTY'S VICTORY IN THE NOVEMBER  
CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS, AND TO SECURE A SECOND TERM  
FOR HIMSELF . EVEN IF THIS IS AT THE EXPENSE OF THE  
PALESTINIANS AND THEIR CONTINUED SUFFERING."

-- A COORDINATED AMERICAN ISRAELI AGGRESSION  
THE LEADING COMMENTARY OF CENTER-LEFT, INFLUENTIAL  
ARABIC DAILY AL-DUSTOUR READ ON JULY 2: "IT IS NO  
LONGER A SECRET TO ANY OBSERVER OF THE MIDDLE EAST THAT  
THE CONTINUOUS ISRAELI AGGRESSION AGAINST THE  
PALESTINIAN PEOPLE, THE TRAVESTIES, DEATH, DESTRUCTION,  
AND TERROR, ARE DONE WITH OPEN U.S. ENCOURAGEMENT AND  
WITH UNRESERVED POLITICAL SUPPORT FROM THE  
ADMINISTRATION THAT SEES THIS AGGRESSION AS SELF-  
DEFENSE AND THAT SEES ARIEL SHARON AS A MAN OF PEACE.

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES IS A COORDINATED AMERICAN-ISRAELI AGGRESSION, BUT WE WARN AGAINST GIVING FREE REIGN TO SHARON WHO IS EXPLOITING UNLIMITED AMERICAN SUPPORT TO NURTURE EXTREMISM, CONSOLIDATE THE OCCUPATION, DESTROY ANY CHANCE FOR PEACE, AND PROBABLY DRAG THE REGION TO ANOTHER WAR."

-- A NEW DISASTER  
DAILY COLUMNIST JAMIL AL-NIMRY WROTE IN INDEPENDENT, MASS-APPEAL ARABIC DAILY AL-ARAB AL-YAWM ON JULY 2:  
"COLIN POWELL DASHED THE HOPES OF ARAB OFFICIALS BY ADOPTING THE WORST POSSIBLE INTERPRETATION OF PRESIDENT BUSH'S SPEECH. HE NOT ONLY RULED OUT THE PROSPECTS OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN THE PRESENT, BUT ALSO AFFIRMED THE PRECONDITION OF CHANGING THE PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP, WHICH WAS REEMPHASIZED CATEGORICALLY BY RICE. SEEN FROM HERE, THERE IS NO AIM FOR THE AMERICAN PERFORMANCE EXCEPT TO SUPPORT THE ISRAELI PROGRAM, USING TALK ABOUT A PALESTINIAN STATE AS A WEAK AND WORTHLESS COVER. IF THE OFFER WERE OF A PALESTINIAN STATE AND AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN RETURN FOR ARAFAT'S RESIGNATION, WE WOULD BE THE FIRST TO CALL ON HIM TO DO SO. BUT THIS IS NOT THE CASE. IT IS A REPEAT OF THE SAGA OF IRAQ AND SADDAM, WHICH IS JUST A PRETEXT FOR EXTENDING THE SIEGE INDEFINITELY." GNEHM